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What Courts Are For

A St. Paul judge decided in a recent case that it is perfectly legal for a group of business firms to boycott a plumbing establishment which refused to join them in the "open shop" war on organized labor in the twin cities.

In Minneapolis, the adjoining city in the same state of Minnesota another judge sends men to jail without trial because they, under instructions of the Trade and Labor Assembly, advertised a boycott on an "unfair" movie.

Now, the average worker, who still believes what he read in the school books about law and government, is apt to say, "There's some mistake here. One of these judges is off the track."

But such is not the case. Both of these judges know what they are doing. There is no inconsistency whatever. Nobody is off the track except the worker who thinks he sees a contradiction in their decisions.

Courts are class institutions. They are part and parcel of the system of exploitation and op-

pression known as capitalism. They are functioning in good order and according to their historic purpose when they are used to beat down the organized workers and uphold the organized bosses. The work they are doing in the twin cities is just exactly the kind of work they were made for and which they will continue to do as long as the workers allow them to exist.

The "Left" Must Organize

The left wing was badly defeated at the machinists' convention, despite the fact that the great majority of the rank and file are more in harmony with the ideas they proposed than with those of the reactionary machine. The "reds" who went to the convention with such high confidence, emboldened by the knowledge that the men in the shops want a new deal in the union, soon discovered that it takes something more than enthusiasm and good intentions to buck the smooth-running machine of the reactionaries.

All the old tricks of the labor politicians were in evidence at this convention. At a crucial stage of the fight the radicals were demoralized by the defection of some of the leaders they had relied on to carry the fight on the floor. The machine "got to" them. The rank and file rebels were still further handicapped by the lack of agreement among themselves as to the tactics to be used and the program to be supported. Pitted against them they found a solidly united bloc of paid officials who were agreed to a man on what they wanted and how to get it. Old heads in the game of manipulating conventions were on the job at Rochester, leading and directing the fight for reaction.

We ought to take a leaf from the Russian book. The revolutionists in that country control the unions, soviets and other working class organizations despite the fact that in many cases they constitute but a small minority of the membership. They do this by virtue of their own organization formed for the express purpose of dominating the larger bodies. They go into every meeting or convention with a program worked out and agreed beforehand, voting and fighting in a solid body for whatever measures